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ABSTRACT

The report describes results of interviews with 18 workplace literacy education providers across the United States. Respondents include program directors, curriculum writers, teacher trainers, teachers, and consultants to programs serving a range of learners. An introductory section summarizes study methodology, workplace literacy program types, and issues and challenges identified. The second section describes five service provider partnership models and offers examples: (1) the workplace in partnership with an educational institution; (2) workplace-union partnership; (3) a business employing its own ESL teaching staff; (4) a private contractor offering educational services to business; and (5) a workplace offering programs in cooperation with a community-based organization. The third section discusses trends, challenges, and issues, and solutions encountered in the survey, including: securing funding; involving all partners; determining whether the program offers education or training; customizing the curriculum vs. developing generic competencies; demonstrating results; and developing a professional workforce to deliver instruction. An agenda for research is outlined in the fourth section; information needs include workplace skills and discourse, what works best in workplace education, and methods for assessing program outcomes, costs, and benefits. Contains 45 references. Several interview summaries are appended. (MSE) (Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse on Literacy Education)

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Workplace ESL Instruction

Interviews from the Field

Miriam Burt

ED 407 879

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Issues in Workplace and Vocational ESL Instruction Series

Learning to Work in a New Land:
A Review and Sourcebook for Vocational and Workplace ESL
by Marilyn K. Gillespie

●

The Vocational Classroom:
A Great Place to Learn English
by Elizabeth Platt

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The Vocational Classroom: A Great Place to Learn English
by Elizabeth Platt
Using examples from actual vocational classrooms, this paper explores how vocational teachers, ESL teachers, and vocational program administrators can maximize opportunities for limited-English-proficient students to improve their English as they master vocational content.

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Introduction

Since the late 1980s, as the United States has continued to shift from a manufacturing to a service-based economy, researchers have been reporting that changes in employment patterns will require workers to have better communication skills and to be both literate and proficient in English (Gillespie, 1996; McGroarty & Scott, 1993). Federal studies on trends in the workplace (Chisman, 1989; Johnston & Packer, 1987; U.S. Departments of Education and Labor, 1988) predict that a changing world economy and technological advances will mean that, by the year 2000, a majority of jobs will require excellent written and communication skills.

At the same time as the skills needs have been increasing, the workforce has been becoming increasingly older, female, and composed of minorities, including nonnative speakers of English (Gillespie, 1996; Johnson & Packer, 1987; U.S. Department of Education, 1991). It is the issues surrounding the workplace instructional needs of these nonnative speakers of English, that are discussed in this paper.

To learn about workplace ESL instructional programs, their goals, and the issues they face, 18 educational providers at workplace ESL programs across the United States were interviewed. The interviews were conducted by telephone and inperson in 1995 and 1996. The educational providers interviewed included program directors, curriculum writers, teacher trainers, teachers, and consultants from Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, the District of Columbia, Illinois, Maryland, Michigan, New York, Texas, and Virginia. The programs serve a range of learners from entry-level workers with low-level English skills to highly paid engineers with good English literacy and proficiency.

In the interviews, the providers were asked about program goals, stakeholder involvement, critical points of instruction, curricula, and program accomplishments and failures. Many of the programs described had been funded, at least in part, by the U.S. Department of Education's (ED) National Workplace Literacy Program (NWLP). ED had developed the National Workplace Literacy Program (NWLP) in 1988 and awarded grants to projects offering instruction in basic skills, literacy, and English as a second language. Over the next six years, until 1994, the NWLP funded more than 300 workplace literacy programs. These may not be totally representative workplace programs: Unlike some programs, those under NWLP were relatively well-funded; included compulsory evaluation components; required an explicit, active partnership between an educational institution and a workplace; and were mandated to implement their programs substantially as described in their proposals. On the other hand, these NWLP programs show what can be accomplished with reasonable funding and workplace—education cooperation, and what issues and challenges remain. Further, at the time of the interviews, most NWLP-funded programs were no longer receiving these federal monies and were in the process of transitioning to other means of support, so the interviews yielded information on issues arising as these programs struggled to become financially self-sufficient.

This paper will use the information from these interviews and from a survey of recent literature to explore program models and to discuss issues and challenges facing all workplace ESL programs. Then, an agenda for research in the field of workplace ESL instruction will be briefly discussed. Summaries of the interviews are included in Appendix B. Appendix A is a list of the programs.

Program Types

ESL workplace classes demonstrate a wide variety of content. In the interviews for this paper, service providers described classes where Southeast Asian computer technicians at an information storage company practice giving verbal confirmation of comprehension and asking for clarification; where Hispanic machine operators at a garment factory watch a videotaped role play they have just created that simulates a work team meeting; where West African kitchen workers at a hotel look at and answer questions about their work schedules; and where Filipino payroll clerks in a hospital discriminate between initial /p/ and /f/ phonemes for vocabulary used on their job, including "payroll," "personnel," and "finances."

Similarly, programs may take may different organizational forms. In Pima County Adult Education in Tucson, Arizona, a division of the Superintendent of Schools' Office works with manufacturing and other firms; in New York City, more than 20 unions participate in the Consortium for Worker Education, which offers work-related basic skills, ESL, and skills training programs to union members and their families; and in Anchorage, Alaska, hundreds of volunteer instructors offer classes financed by contracts, donations, and vocational rehabilitation and public housing monies.

Although these program models appear very different on the surface, there are common elements to the models, just as there are common elements in instructional techniques among workplace programs. One such element, proposed by Grognet (1994) as essential for delivering effective workplace instruction, is a *partnership* between *the workplace and at least one other entity*.

Gillespie (1996, pp. 110-112) has proposed four delivery models for offering instruction at the workplace. Each of these models demonstrates a partnership between the workplace and at least one other entity. The models are categorized as:

1. **workplace–education partnership;**
2. **workplace–union partnership;**
3. **workplace employing its own program staff;** and
4. **workplace–private contractor partnership.**

Interviews conducted for this paper suggest that a fifth delivery model be included. So, five models will be discussed, the fifth being:

5. **workplace and community–based organization partnership.**

Issues and Challenges

In the interviews with the educational service providers and the various workplace ESL programs, certain similar issues continually surfaced. Six of the issues that will be discussed in depth in this paper are:

1. Securing funding

Workplace programs have difficulty both finding sources of funds and securing sufficient funds as federal money is being terminated and busi-

nesses are downsizing. The discussion will involve marketing, deciding what to deliver, and delivering what has been promised. Ways of maximizing money invested in educational programs will also be explored.

2. Involving all partners

The issue of involving all partners—educators, funders, unions, and businesses—in all stages of the program, including planning, implementing, and evaluating instructional programs, will be examined. Also discussed will be the need to include, within each stakeholder group, all players: middle managers and frontline supervisors, as well as upper management.

3. Focusing on education or training

Employers seem particularly reluctant to fund programs for workers at the lowest levels of literacy and proficiency in English. When they do support such programs, they often have unrealistic expectations of what can be accomplished and how quickly learning can occur. At the same time, educators need to understand and take seriously the employer's objectives, costs, and constraints. Included in the discussion of this topic is the conflict between those who feel that workplace instruction should be solely work-centered, and those who feel it should be at least as much worker-centered. That is, should instruction focus on both what the workers need to learn to do their jobs better *and* what they need to know to enhance their lives?

4. Customizing curricula

In the past, particularly with workplace programs funded by the U.S. Department of Education's National Workplace Literacy Program (NWLP), individual programs based their curricula on detailed, job-specific needs analysis. And the service provider's ability to customize the curricula to meet the needs of a specific workplace is often considered a strong selling point, when marketing one's program to the private sector. There is an awareness, however, among some employers and educational providers, that narrowly defined skills are soon outdated in today's workplace. There is growing support for defining workplace skills more broadly and emphasizing their transferability across job tasks and even into private life. Further, some programs are attempting to connect workplace learning to the Secretary of Labor's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS).

5. Demonstrating results

The theoretical link between workplace instruction and improvement in productivity is difficult to show in the real world; measurement problems abound and workplaces are often undergoing significant changes concurrent with instruction.

In addition, a number of employers are implementing quality management programs, worker teams, technical training, and other features of a high performance workplace. These factors add to the complexity of accountability for the service provider. Yet, unless language minority workers can function in these workplaces, they will be confined to dead-end jobs or lose their jobs entirely.

6. Developing a professional educational workforce

Effective workplace instruction requires skills in addition to traditional classroom teaching skills. Workplace education professionals must market their programs to businesses, not educators; they must identify both employees' *and* employer's needs that can be addressed with training and develop appropriate curricula; they must deliver classroom instruction and plan, collect, and analyze evaluation data; and they must be flexible enough to meet unforeseen challenges and structured enough to work within a business's constraints.

Service Provider Partnership Models

The Workplace–Education Partnership Model

The first model, that of the workplace partnering with an educational institution, is the most common. Although federal funding is not a prerequisite for this type of partnership, such money has often been the catalyst for beginning a project. State and local governments may also support these projects. In this model, the educational institution generally provides the instructors and develops the curricula. It also conducts the needs assessment and keeps all stakeholders informed. The business will usually provide space for classes. Increasingly, the company is covering the entire cost of the program including paying the instructors and providing pay or release time for the workers to attend the classes.

Coordinators, teacher trainers, teachers, and curriculum writers from projects of this type were interviewed. The projects were the Arlington Education and Employment Program (REEP), the El Paso Community College Workplace Communications Program (EPCC), the Worker Education Program of Northeastern Illinois University, the Fairfax County Adult ESL Workplace Program, and the Pima County Adult Education (PCAE) Workplace Education Project.

1. The Arlington Education and Employment Program (REEP)

The Arlington Education and Employment Program (REEP) of Virginia has provided ESL instruction at the workplace since 1988. From 1988 until 1993 it received four NWLP grants. During that time, REEP established partnerships with various businesses (hotels, residential care centers, light industry, and restaurants), with chambers of commerce, and with restaurant associations from Arlington and Alexandria counties in Virginia. REEP is currently using other sources and seeking additional funds to continue workplace projects previously funded under the NWLP that had provided ESL instruction to food service workers, housekeepers, and nurses' aides in retirement homes and restaurants.

2. El Paso Community College (EPCC) Workplace Communication Skills for Limited English Proficient Garment Industry Workers

A second project based on the model of a partnership between a workplace and an educational institution is the El Paso Community College (EPCC) Workplace Communication Skills Program for limited English proficient garment industry workers. Like REEP, the project received initial funding from the Department of Education's NWLP and now operates without this money, working with several employers in the El Paso area including Levi Strauss and Company and Baxter Converters. It also works with a union partner, the Rio Grande Workers Alliance/AFL-CIO. The EPCC operated a more or less traditional workplace project at the start, but changed as the business partners began to restructure their organizations to follow more of a team-based approach. The project adopted a dynamic curriculum-development process teaching communication and teamwork skills through problem-solving activities, as well as videotaped role plays about learner-generated workplace themes and issues.

What makes the El Paso project unique is that learners are not placed in classes by their English language proficiency or literacy skills. Learners with low English literacy or minimal speaking ability may choose to take higher

level "Workplace Communications"—which focuses on problem solving and other skills needed for the team-based approach—before or instead of "Workplace ESL" or "Workplace Basic Skills." Hence, the classes are generally mixed, with a range of speaking and literacy skills in every class. The heterogeneity in English levels may be tolerated, if not encouraged, because almost all of the employees at this Levi Strauss (with the exception of several managers) speak Spanish fluently, if not natively; all teachers in the program are bilingual; and in class, as on the job, both English and Spanish are freely used. However, as much as bilingualism is accepted, if not encouraged, speaking and reading and writing English are still prerequisites for advancement on the job.

3. The Worker Education Program of Northeastern Illinois University

The Worker Education Program of the Northeastern Illinois University Chicago Teachers' Center is the only project described in this paper that continues to receive funding from the NWLP. This project has been in operation since 1993 and has received three grants from the U.S. Department of Education since then. The business partners are a variety of light manufacturing companies (e.g., Henri Studios, Midway Cap, Chicago Transparent Products). The Union of Needletrade, Industrial, and Textile Employees (UNITE!), which is present in all shops in the project, is the union partner.

What is notable about this project is that the union is such an active partner. The union helps guide the university in deciding which companies will be most receptive to holding workplace ESL classes. Union staff also accompany the education staff to all meetings with the companies, especially the initial, pre-project meetings. The union and the university work so closely together that the Worker Education Program staff have offices both at the university and at the union hall, and some classes are held at the union hall.

Having offered instruction in basic skills and low-level literacy, the project has recently expanded to include classes for language minority bank workers with high-level skills in English. For them, the workplace instruction is focused on pronunciation and higher order communication skills to facilitate working in teams and problem solving.

4. Fairfax County Adult ESL Workplace Program

Fairfax County (Virginia) Public Schools (FCPS) has been offering "ESL in the workplace" classes through its department of adult ESL since 1981. The department has received several grants to support these classes including some Adult Education Act, Section 353 monies from the state and two NWLP grants. When taking advantage of this monetary support, employers from the (targeted) banks and hotels tended to favor longer, more extensive ESL programs. However, because the project costs have shifted to the employers, the classes have been shorter and more focused. Since the loss of federal funding, FCPS has concentrated on providing classes to beginning-level learners, generally hospital workers and workers in property maintenance.

An interesting development for FCPS, one that makes it stand out from the other workplace ESL services providers, is that, in recent years, under contract from the county Department of Human Development (DHD), it has offered *vocational* ESL (VESL) classes targeting specific job skills for potential employees in retail sales, basic computer work, custodial services and property maintenance, and accounting. With this program, VESL teachers support vocational teachers working with refugees (funded by refugee resettlement monies) and immigrants (under the Fairfax

County DHD monies). FCPS currently offers both the publicly-funded VESL classes and the contract-funded workplace ESL classes.

Fairfax has continued to seek outside funding: In 1995, FCPS won a grant from the Project in Adult Immigrant Education (PAIE), funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and headquartered at the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL). This grant has allowed FCPS to investigate setting up a coalition of small businesses to offer workplace ESL instruction jointly. In late 1996, the FCPS won another PAIE grant enabling them to develop and pilot, in workplace, vocational, and ESL classes, lessons that incorporate the Secretary (of Labor's) Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) competencies, to improve the workplace readiness of adult learners.

5. The Pima County Adult Education Workplace Education Project (PCAEWEP)

The Pima County Adult Education Workplace Education Project (PCAEWEP), in Tucson, Arizona is the fifth and final project of the first model. It will be discussed in the most detail because it has had the most success in making the transition from a federally-funded project to one supported almost entirely by contracts. How it has successfully managed this transition is important for the field.

The Pima County Adult Education program (PCAE) has offered workplace basic skills and workplace ESL classes since 1988. Although PCAE had received four workplace grants from the U.S. Department of Education, it was not awarded a three-year grant in 1994. Unlike some of the other formerly-funded projects, it has maintained many of the worksite projects originally funded through the NWLP.

PCAE now funds its workplace classes through a combination of contracts with companies and county adult education monies. PCAEWEP continues to serve many diverse industries including local manufacturing companies and has served companies such as the Westin La Paloma, Allied Signal Controls and Accessories, Bun-Brown Corporation (semi-conductor manufacturing), 3M, Tri-Tronics, Inc., the University of Arizona, and the Tucson Medical Center.

PCAEWEP's success in maintaining workplace programs is due to several factors. First, the program had the expertise of an evaluator who started a workplace ESL program at Motorola many years before the NWLP was in existence. Second, it received help from the local Chambers of Commerce, consortia of businesses, and innkeepers' associations in recruiting their member companies for the workplace programs. Third, it has strong support from the Pima County Adult Education Program, which supports activities employers may be less willing to subsidize, such as curriculum development and instructor training. Finally, PCAE's Workplace Education Project has a full-time administrator, a project manager, whose sole responsibility is to manage the workplace program. The project manager works hard to keep the program in the public eye. She is actively involved in marketing the program and attends local and regional business association and training consortia meetings. She will also make "cold calls" if necessary to promote the program. She will spend time with a company initially to explain the program, and distribute written materials describing the program and its accomplishments, courses offered, participating companies, and contact information.

And, at the conclusion of each class, the project manager sends the company a report about program highlights, evaluation results, and anonymous results of learner assessment measures. A partial list of classes offered follows:

- Basic ESL (listening, speaking, filling out forms) that is multilevel unless the workplace is large enough to support two or more ESL classes
- Accent reduction
- Specialty courses: ESL Reading, Writing (often comes from worker requests)
- Math classes: second language learners are mixed with native speakers
- Higher level writing classes: second language learners are mixed with native speakers
- Communication, problem solving, team building, and quality awareness: mixed native and nonnative speakers
- Presentation skills

Earlier, the project sought to link workplace instruction, to improved productivity at the workplace. Due to myriad other factors (including for example, change in supervision, improved technology, and reorganized workforce) it was nearly impossible to prove that the educational program was directly responsible for this improvement. Therefore, the PCAE Workplace Education Project no longer advertises that it will improve workplace productivity.

The decision not to tie the program to increased productivity at the workplace apparently has not been a factor in keeping companies involved and in recruiting new companies: A number of the businesses are repeat customers, having contracted with the Workplace Education Project many times. They also recommend the program to other employers. Several of the workers have taken multiple classes and asked for additional classes.

Over time, project staff have learned to listen carefully to what the companies are saying in the initial meetings to see exactly what a job entails before agreeing to do it. They have learned to maintain the quality of the class they offer, because, as the project manager says, "it's all you have in the end." Because of this quality issue, the PCAE Workplace Education Project prefers not to offer multilevel ESL classes, but rather to offer smaller, more homogeneous classes, if possible. It has learned the value of a good, solid, generic workplace curriculum that can be readily customized to the individual worksite and the individual job, if need be.

The Workplace–Union Partnership Model

Unions have a history of providing education to their members (see Business Council for Effective Literacy, 1987; Rosenblum, 1996). In the early 1900's, immigrant-based unions, such as the International Ladies Garment Workers Union (ILGWU) and the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union (ACTWU) began offering night classes in English and citizenship, using teachers from the Board of Education in New York City and union staff. Unions urged immigrant members to learn English in order to become citizens and to advocate for the eight-hour day, labor's right to strike, and improved occupational health and safety regulations. Also a factor in the unions' emphasis on education was each union's desire to strengthen itself with active, participating members who could speak English (Rosenblum, 1996).

By the early 1980s, the decline in manufacturing jobs, the restructuring of job sites with work teams, and the emergence of new technology had displaced some workers and made retraining necessary for many still employed (U.S. Departments of Education and Labor, 1988). However, low basic skills and/or lack of English language proficiency often made it impossible for workers to access the retraining offered under the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) of the U. S. Department of Labor (DOL) (Wrigley & Ewen, 1995). Likewise, unions wishing to send their workers to local vocational or trade schools to upgrade skills found the workers often lacked the basic skills necessary to gain entry to such programs. Many workers, both native and non native speakers of English, lacked the time and often the means to attend local ABE and ESL programs. Classes offered at the workplace, "on the clock" (during work hours), solved these problems of affordability and time.

Many unions have written workplace education into collective bargaining with companies. With so-called "penny funds," workplace programs are financed, in whole or in part, by the few cents per hour or per worker that the companies place in a fund and that is then matched by union dues. The United Auto Workers Union (UAW) and Ford Motor Company in Dearborn, Michigan, have used this type of fund and the collective bargaining mechanism to provide workplace centers throughout their plants. UAW Chrysler and General Motors have set up similar programs. Currently, there are 106 skills centers throughout the country at GM plants. These centers offer everything from Adult Basic English (ABE), General Educational Development (GED), high school completion, and ESL to academic counseling and tuition reimbursement for courses taken outside of the skills center. An added benefit for the UAW workers is that spouses have access to the educational programs and services to which the union members are entitled.

Although the programs are sponsored by union–workplace partnerships, partnership is also sought with educational entities. Individual centers seek federal and state funding for these programs and use local adult education instructors to staff them.

Another way unions have managed to provide educational services, including workplace ESL classes, is through unions forming consortia for worker education. One such consortium is the New York Consortium for Worker Education (CWE).

Consortium for Worker Education

The CWE was founded in 1985 by the education director of Teamsters Local 237 in New York City. The Teamsters wanted to organize the labor unions for lobbying the state legislature to obtain line-item funding in the state budget for worker educational programs. Currently, more than 20 unions participate in the CWE, which serves over 10,000 union members and their families with work-related basic skills, ESL, and skills training programs (Rosenblum, 1996). The CWE has offered workplace ESL instruction for more than four years. Joint workplace- and union-sponsored instructional programs need to address workplace, worker, and union objectives. Hence the goals of the CWE classes include the following: to improve the quality of lives of the workers; to help them both to do better at their current jobs and to be more marketable if layoffs occur; to help workers understand changes in the workplace so that the union and its workers can be part of the decision-making process; and to give workers the language and literacy skills they need to become more active union members. Because of these goals, communication skills to enable participation in union and company

meetings are taught along with those needed to succeed on the job. Communicating with co-workers, respecting other cultures, understanding diversity, knowing how to speak with those from other cultures, and respecting gender differences are also part of the curriculum content.

The stakeholders, of course, include the union representatives as well as the company representative. The educational partner is the consortium itself, which plans, implements, and evaluates the instructional programs. As happens in the educational/workplace partnership model, front-line managers are not always as involved as the consortium would like them to be and CWE reports that their involvement is key to getting the workers to attend.

CWE has yet one more stakeholder or partner, the Industrial Technology Assistance Corporation (ITAC). This is a nonprofit company that works with small businesses to help them change the workplace to high technology/high performance. For one program in particular, where the company is moving towards becoming a high-tech/high performance workplace, ITAC has been a stakeholder in the workplace ESL class to prepare workers for the training the company will offer to re-orient its employees.

The ESL Education within a Workplace Model

A third model is that of a business employing its own instructional staff. Only one such program was interviewed for this paper—the workplace ESL program at StorageTek, a computer information storage company in the Denver, Colorado area.

StorageTek

The StorageTek workplace ESL instructional program evolved over a period of years. Several years ago, as the company started to hire language minority employees, corporate trainers informed the corporate manager about the language and literacy needs of these nonnative employees. Tutoring by company volunteers was offered. Then the corporate vice president for manufacturing decided to hire trained instructors as part of the company's staff.

Also important to this effort to improve the basic skills and the English skills of the workers was the company's move to implement a Total Quality Management (TQM) system: Technology had already started to step up the basic level of skills needed, and now job responsibilities were further affected as the company moved toward a team environment and a quality management approach. All employees needed to be able to use computers, communicate in teams, solve problems, and make decisions. Because many workers at StorageTek are nonnative speakers of English, oral as well as literacy skills were lacking in many employees. StorageTek decided to offer instruction to improve basic skills, English language skills, *and* cross-cultural skills.

Courses were eight weeks in length and included Basic ESL; Reading for the Workplace; Writing for the Workplace; Problem Solving for the Workplace; Classes team taught with workplace trainers/specialists on specific customized topics; Test of the Adult Literacy Survey (TALS) classes [a class to prepare learners to pass the math and reading tests of the National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS)]; Presentation Skills; Pronunciation; and Communication in the Workplace.

Because the instructors were employees of the company, it was easier for the program to be completely workplace-based. Communication between the first level supervisors and the program was also facilitated by this factor. The team-taught classes where the ESL instructor worked with the subject specialist were very successful, as

were the pre-classes taught to prepare language minority workers for computer classes or other job-specific classes.

Unfortunately, downsizing of the company has followed the shift to the high performance workplace. Managers are no longer allowed unlimited access to the classes, and staff has been cut back. The future of the education department as an entity within StorageTek is not known. It is also in doubt whether StorageTek's language minority employees, mostly Southeast Asian, will continue to receive the cultural and linguistic training needed to ensure that they have the skills necessary to keep their jobs in the midst of this change.

The Workplace–Private Contractor Partnership Model

Another model for offering workplace training is that of a private contractor offering educational services to a business. In this model, an experienced ESL practitioner is usually directly involved in planning, implementing, and evaluating the workplace program. This means the private contractor will probably be involved in doing market analysis, contacting the employers in a specific area, meeting with the company, doing the initial needs assessment, writing the curriculum, teaching the classes, assessing learning progress, and evaluating the program's effectiveness.

Three language consultants were interviewed for this paper. They were Anne Lomperis, of Language Training Designs in Kensington, Maryland; Deborah Kennedy of Language at Work, Washington, D.C.; and Faith Hayflich of LinguaTec in Sunnyvale, California. The LinguaTec interview is summarized in Appendix B.

1. Anne Lomperis, Language Training Designs

Anne Lomperis, a consultant in Rockville, Maryland, began her private consulting after years of experience working in adult ESL programs and workplace ESL projects. Initially, Lomperis provided all direct services: She contacted companies, conducted needs assessments, taught classes, and administered the tests. Lomperis now performs less direct service and more training of trainers, teaching American trainers (stateside and overseas) and international trainers (overseas) how to provide workplace ESL instruction. This branching out into training of other educational professionals is not unusual for private consultants who find themselves with larger and more numerous contracts than they can handle alone. What is interesting about Lomperis is that she has moved into overseas training. She has been very active in professional organizations, particularly the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD), which has helped her obtain local, national, and international contracts.

2. Deborah Kennedy, Language At Work (LAW)

Another private consulting firm that offers workplace ESL instruction is Language at Work (LAW) based in Washington, D.C., and directed by Deborah Kennedy and Judy Pollack. It has been in existence since 1986. Like Anne Lomperis, Kennedy and Pollack find that they are increasingly training other ESL educators to offer instruction. Language at Work has also found that it is most often called upon to offer instruction to workers with upper intermediate or advanced level English skills. LAW cites as an accomplishment for the program the fact that, *over time*, skills of the workers who have participated in LAW classes improve, and the workers take advantage of career opportunities. LAW staff interviewed said that they customize the curriculum of each project they operate.

3. Faith Hayflich, LinguaTec

Faith Hayflich of Sunnyvale, a city in the Silicon Valley of northern California, has provided workplace ESL instruction through her private consulting firm, LinguaTec, since 1980. The goals of her programs are to improve the access of professionals in other technical fields to opportunities to advance at the workplace and to reduce the barriers to communication between native and nonnative speakers.

For a customized course, LinguaTec will conduct an extensive needs assessment (100-200 hours) and then spend additional time customizing lessons, sometimes an hour or more for each contact hour of class. Hayflich has found the following to be generic needs of engineers and manufacturing workers:

- Engineers: participating in meetings; improving ability to be understood (pronunciation); following typical conversations (idioms and jokes); and creating visibility for themselves to improve upward mobility.

- Manufacturing Workers: when there is a team environment, participating in meetings; improving ability to be understood (pronunciation); following instructions (vocabulary development, rapid speech); showing comprehension and asking questions when one has not understood; completing forms; and reading job instructions.

LinguaTec offers three types of programs:

1. Standardized courses that have been developed for technical professionals. These include such courses as Speaking Under Pressure, Accent Improvement, Idioms and Vocabulary in the Workplace, and American Business Culture. (These were initially developed as customized courses but have been standardized based on 15 years' experience working with technical professionals.)

2. Customized courses for manufacturing workers, such as those mentioned above.

3. Customized programs for professionals working for U.S. companies overseas, who are sent to the United States for technical training. Content includes working with audiotapes of their technical trainers and with technical training videos and manuals to improve comprehension.

Ms. Hayflich lists the following as necessary to the success of her workplace ESL programs:

- an extensive needs assessment process;

- a five-minute individual interview to place learners in the proper English level;

- some individual lesson modules, such as "Speaking Up at Meetings," that carry through to many workplace settings; and

- frequent meetings of all stakeholders.

The Workplace–Community-Based Organization Partnership Model

The fifth and final model for workplace partnerships is that of workplaces and community-based organizations (CBOs). What distinguishes the CBO partnership model from the educational institution model is that CBOs often use volunteer staff to offer direct ESL instruction and tutoring at the workplace. Generally, however, at least one paid staff person will facilitate the program, write the curriculum, meet with the business, and provide training for the teachers or tutors.

Of course, as was the case with the other partnership models, businesses may be asked to purchase learners' books and materials, to supply workplace materials to the instructors, to provide release time for the workers, to meet with the tutor-trainers or the tutors to discuss learner needs, and to provide space for the classes. Businesses may also be asked to donate money to the organization itself, either in addition to, or in lieu of, the direct funding to the workplace project.

Three coordinators of CBO workplace ESL instructional programs were interviewed. The organizations offering classes included the Spanish Education and Development (SED) Center, a CBO in Washington, D.C., that operated a workplace ESL program for 18 months under an NWLP grant; the San Fernando (California) Literacy Council, a CBO that provides almost exclusively one-to-one tutoring to employees at various hospitals and convalescent homes in the area through community volunteers; and the Anchorage Literacy Council in Alaska, a CBO that offers group-based instruction through volunteer teachers. A summary of the Anchorage interwiev is included in Appendix B.

1. The Spanish Education and Development (SED) Center Workplace Program

The Spanish Education and Development Center, a nonprofit organization in Washington, D.C. that serves a largely Hispanic population, operated a workplace ESL program in 1992. The program was funded by an NWLP grant and provided workplace ESL instruction to hotel and restaurant workers. The following year, the SED Center applied for but did not win another grant. Since that time, the CBO has been unable to secure funding to support another workplace program. The SED Center program enrolled laundry workers, kitchen staff, and housekeepers from three hotels. The program was small and its coordinator was also the teacher, the curriculum writer, and the liaison with the companies. In this way, the coordinator functioned like a private consultant. The SED Center program struggled with getting the support of the direct supervisors of the participants throughout the project, even though the coordinator cited the importance of getting this "buy-in" from the beginning.

2. The San Fernando Literacy Council Workplace Program

The workplace ESL program offered by the San Fernando Literacy Council in California presents a variation on workplace programs. The San Fernando Literacy Council is an affiliate of Laubach Literacy International and uses the Laubach method and materials. This program consists almost exclusively of one-to-one tutoring, that is, each worker/learner is paired with a tutor. The literacy council offers this instruction at various hospitals and convalescent homes in the area with tutors that are recruited and trained by the council. The employers provide space for the classes and (at times) some release time for workers by extending their lunch hours to allow them to study with the tutors. The learners are asked to buy their own books.

3. The Anchorage Literacy Council Workplace Program

In Alaska, the Anchorage Literacy Council received grants in 1991 and 1992 from the NWLP to offer workplace instruction to various businesses in the area. Although workplace ESL instruction through the literacy council preceded this, the federal funding had a major influence on program quality and quantity of classes offered.

The literacy council at Anchorage offers workplace ESL instruction at hospitals, hotels, grocery stores, dry cleaners, banks, school districts (for support staff), and newspaper offices. Instruction is given in groups, not through one-to-one tutoring, as is the case with much volunteer instruction. These

classes, taught by volunteer instructors, are financed by contracts with companies, private and company donations, Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC)/Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) contracts, and vocational rehabilitation monies that are earmarked for job skills. Funding also comes from the Alaska Housing Finance Group (the state HUD), which supports pre-employment classes held in a public housing development.

Needs analyses established that many workers at the targeted worksites did not have the oral communication skills to prosper on the job. Further, written work forms were not being completed: Some workers avoided even attempting to do the forms, and some did them incorrectly or incompletely. Finally, there was a problem understanding the pronunciation of many workers, especially by phone. At the same time that these basic skills deficiencies were being discovered, the local companies were facing major changes in work requirements as jobs were requiring more computer and other technical skills. Yet, as job requirements rose, so did the value placed on those who could speak other languages, because the companies were also expanding to international markets.

Under the NWLP grant, 22 classes were held, at levels one through four, following the Laubach system of leveling instruction. When Laubach materials were used, they were adapted for the workplace. Phonics instruction was based on vocabulary used in the specific jobs. For example, workers in the accounting department of a local hospital who had difficulties distinguishing between the initial /p/ and /f/ sounds practiced "payroll," "finance," and "personnel," rather than the words listed in the Laubach workbook. A competency-based ESL text, *Lifeprints* (Podnecky, Grognet, & Crandall, 1994) was also used. In addition to this commercial textbook, workplace vocabulary, materials, and conversation formed the basis for the classes. Other classes offered the ESL learners were Pre-Algebra and Pre-CPR Certification (which focused on vocabulary and pronunciation of CPR words).

The Anchorage program has found that it can best serve learners by offering "pre-classes" or classes preparatory to specific job training or to employment itself. For example, Anchorage provides pre-Total Quality Management classes for employees at the dry cleaner's and pre-first aid courses at other workplaces where the workers' reading and speaking level is not high enough to benefit from company-taught safety classes. In the ESL classes, the program stresses the vocabulary that will be used in TQM or safety classes. Likewise, the literacy council offers pre-workplace instruction to those ESL learners who either cannot speak well enough to get a job or cannot read and write. In these classes, specific, key language and literacy skills, including how to interview and how to fill out an application, are taught to laid-off workers and to spouses of workers.

The project director cites many successes for the instructional program. First, many participants have been promoted, or have assumed additional responsibilities. Second, participants started taking advantage of other company-offered classes and benefits as well as in the ESL classes. Third, one company that was offering classes to employees became computerized during this time and had no difficulties in making the transition. In fact, it was thought that the ESL classes smoothed the transition for the language minority workers. Finally, there was increased awareness of the importance of literacy throughout the individual companies and the business community in general.

Trends, Challenges, and Issues

As noted earlier, certain themes recurred throughout the discussions with practitioners, including the difficulties in securing sufficient funding; the need for involving all partners in the process; the question of focusing on training or on education; issues surrounding customizing the curriculum; the challenges in demonstrating results, or the so-called "return on investment" (ROI) to the companies; and the necessity of developing a professional workforce for the delivery of instruction. Each of these issues will be explored in detail below.

Securing Funding

As educators seek to provide workplace ESL instruction, securing funding is arguably the largest challenge they face. Funding for all adult education is characterized by a patchwork of federal, state, local, and private funds, at times supplemented by learner tuition payments. Many workplace programs receive funding from a variety of sources. Finding and securing sufficient funding for workplace programs, both inside and outside this maze, remains a challenge and a cause for concern, for, as Gillespie (1996) points out, "Unstable and short term funding make it difficult to develop a solid educational program, to purchase needed equipment or materials, or to develop and provide for a professional staff (p.19)." The reduction of 1996 NWLP funds and the lack of appropriations for these projects in the 1997 budgets, clearly demonstrate the need to look beyond the federal government to provide workplace basic skills and ESL instruction.

In several of the programs highlighted above, educational service providers found businesses unwilling to continue workplace programs after government funding was withdrawn. Even where the business partners recognized that the program had been successful, where there had been noticeable improvement in English language skills and in workplace skills, the company chose not to fund a continuation of the program. This reluctance to fund programs, while unfortunate, is not surprising. Most companies are unlikely to spend money on educational programs because it is their *nature* to be for-profit ventures, concerned with the bottom line as they strive to be cost-effective. And, in the United States, there exists no historical precedent for business to educate entry level workers.

Further some areas of the country, such as the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. area, at the time these interviews were conducted, there was a glut of workers looking for entry-level jobs. Because of this oversupply, employers could afford to be selective in choosing their workforce and could, at least at the time these interviews were conducted, circumvent the need to hire and provide training for workers with minimal English language proficiency and literacy skills.

Some companies did agree to continue funding after the federal support was removed. These, however, were often companies that were moving to the so-called "high performance workplace," where the introduction of total quality management (TQM), team-based work, and decision-making throughout the organization was requiring all workers to have good English language proficiency, literacy *and* good communication skills.

As has been noted above, Pima County Adult Education's Workplace Project has been able to maintain programs at many worksites after federal funding has disappeared. Several companies' workplace instruction programs have become totally fee-for-service. An examination of Pima County's success both in transitioning to fee-for-service and in soliciting new contracts suggests four recommendations for securing private funding for workplace programs.

1. Seek out companies that have track records for providing training for their employees.

One project director who was interviewed said, speaking about a failed attempt to enlist a company to support workplace ESL classes, "Next time I will approach only those companies that I know are committed to their workers and to improving their skills." This statement demonstrates the frustrations in working with companies that have not bought into the necessity of providing English language training to their employees.

Working with manufacturing companies that want to improve the lot of their workers and that are upgrading technology and hence skills needed at the workplace, Pima County has been successful at maintaining programs after the termination of federal funding. Similarly, at the Anchorage program, it was felt that the relationship forged with businesses when the program was funded under the NWLP has continued. Many businesses there still provide classes. (Of course, at Anchorage, the cost to the companies is less than at PCAEWEP, or at REEP for example, as the courses are taught by volunteers. However, even with this lower cost, many companies do not seem to consider funding for ESL and basic skills instruction to be their responsibility.)

2. Be willing to spend money to make money.

Pima County's director of adult education has demonstrated this repeatedly. First, he created a full-time position for the workplace project manager, and made directing the workplace projects her sole focus. In other words, she does not carry additional responsibility for the regular ESL program, or for family literacy, or for citizenship classes, as is the case for many workplace directors. Because she has a full-time job, the workplace project manager has the time to contact training departments or human resource departments to make appointments about setting up workplace programs. She has time to make follow-up visits with company managers, report to companies on the academic progress of participants, and prepare final reports as projects are concluded.

The project manager herself also demonstrates a willingness to spend money by creating full-time positions to ensure a quality professional workforce. She has chosen to staff her project with a few full-time staff who have benefits and perks such as sick leave, pension plans, office space, and training rather than with many part-time teachers who have no benefits. Her instructors are committed to the project and are involved in all parts of it including needs assessment, curriculum development, delivery of instruction, learner assessment, and program evaluation. This gives the project continuity and stability as these full-time instructors will be less likely to seek a better position after teaching one or two courses.

Finally, the project manager is helped in her endeavor to maintain professional staff even if fee-for-service contracts are temporarily low at times. Her boss, the director of Pima County Adult Education, has supported and will support

her program by utilizing adult education monies to cover occasional shortfalls, whether in money to cover teacher benefits, or supply books for classes, or even to pay the cost of a teacher.

Most projects do not enjoy this level of support or this ability to control their destiny. By the very nature of being adult education programs, most workplace projects compete for limited funds with other ABE and ESL programs. Most do not have a manager who can devote all her attention and skills to marketing the projects to the business community. Most staff their programs with part-time instructors who may not have previous training or experience in workplace instruction and who are certainly working in at least one other location. Few projects can afford to offer training to their staff, and even if they can, scheduling training so all can attend may be impossible.

3. Offer short, discrete classes.

PCAE, along with many of the other projects, including REEP, has found that prospective sponsors will more readily pay for short term, highly focused classes for longer, more general courses. Courses targeting pronunciation issues, specific vocabulary, or TQM preparation have proved saleable. Unfortunately, entry-level workers often cannot benefit from these specialized courses and require a lot of language and literacy instruction to improve work performance.

The workplace coordinator for the REEP program found that, by dividing a 60 hour course (a typical duration for an adult ESL class) into four segments of 15 hours each with clearly defined objectives, she was able to sell a program for hotel housekeepers to the hotel's general manager sequentially, segment by segment, as the class successfully met the objectives of each part.

4. Diversify class offerings.

Pima County is willing to consider providing instruction for whatever basic skills, communication, and ESL needs are identified by the employer. Because of this, they have developed replicable courses for multiple workplaces and can offer classes such as Accent Reduction, Math, Advanced Writing, and TQM Preparation. The Pima County project manager recommends that educational providers do market analysis and then go where the need is.

Elsewhere, Fairfax County has expanded its repertoire to include vocational English as a second language instruction. Several other programs, including the union-sponsored CWE in New York and the Chicago Worker Education program, provide classes in cross-cultural communication and in accepting diversity. Projects in which a number of second language learners have high level English skills, such as in Pima County, El Paso, and even the Chicago union project, do not differentiate between ESL and basic skills instruction, and offer classes in math and technical writing to native and nonnative speakers together.

However, diversification can only go so far. Several of the service providers, both those connected to educational entities and those who are self-employed, cautioned against making promises that could not be kept, and foretold ultimate failure if they allowed themselves to be convinced to offer courses for which they felt they lacked the background and training. For example, as was noted earlier, the directors of LAW and PCAE's Workplace Education Project both report regretting having allowed themselves, at one time in the past, to agree to provide courses that they felt were outside their fields of experience and expertise.

5. Build or use small business coalitions to sponsor instruction jointly.
To recruit companies for the workplace program, Pima County Adult Education has used umbrella organizations such as the local Chamber of Commerce, education and training consortia that include businesses, and innkeeper's associations. The project manager attends meetings and receptions held by these groups to meet the local players and to advertise classes.

Recently, Fairfax County received a grant from the Project in Adult Immigrant Education (PAIE) funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and headquartered at the Center for Applied Linguistics, to explore the issue of whether small businesses can join together to offer ESL instruction. Using funding from PAIE to contact local small businesses by phone, mailings, and attendance at restaurant association meetings, Fairfax has been working to set up a consortium of these businesses to sponsor workplace ESL classes jointly. Although this project is not yet completed, preliminary results show that the expenditure of funds by educational institutions in this way to initiate the coalition may very well pay off in the long run as the coalition will contract with the educational institution to offer instruction.

6. Market Curricular Products.
When NWLP funding was gone, El Paso Community College (EPCC) continued selling the videos and curriculum guides that had been developed during the early phases of the program when the college had offered direct instruction. EPCC now sells its products to other educational programs or to businesses that wish to set up workplace programs.

Involving All Partners

Reports from the workplace projects stress the need for a "buy-in" by all partners including chief executive officers (CEOs), top-level managers, direct supervisors, human resource managers, union officials, and workers. (See, for example, Alamprese & Kay, 1993; Sperazi, Jurmo, & Rosen, 1991; and U.S. Department of Education, 1992.) The involvement of direct supervisors, in planning the program, in assessing participants' needs, and most importantly—in encouraging the participants to attend classes and then taking advantage of the participants' new skills by giving them more responsibility on the job—is especially key to the success of the program. In interviews with project coordinators, this issue was emphasized repeatedly. Many coordinators ascribed large amounts of credit for successful programs to the amount of support they were able to get from frontline managers. Getting the involvement of the direct supervisor is costly and time-consuming for the employer; and, the importance of the involvement of the direct supervisor to workplace programs is not always immediately obvious to top level managers. Supporting the research for this paper is a survey of 20 midwest companies that offer ESL instruction to their employees (Brigoni, 1996). Brigoni found that the supervisors' unwillingness to release workers for classes was one of the major obstacles to success of the programs.

Several methods of getting this involvement were discussed in the interviews for this paper. First and foremost was the formation of an *advisory board*, a group that has responsibility for planning, implementing, and evaluating workplace programs, and includes representatives of all stakeholders. Generally the board includes CEOs or other high level managers, human resource personnel, educational staff, union representatives, workers, and the frontline supervisors of the targeted workers.

Even if all supervisors are not part of the advisory board, most workplace programs involve direct supervisors through meetings and information dissemination at all stages of the program. As the REEP project director pointed out, unless the frontline managers were included in the program at all stages, there was little likelihood of success. The REEP program has done more than speak to the frontline managers during scheduled meetings. It has invited direct supervisors to participate in role plays and to give short talks to the classes. Further, the program asked the direct supervisors to participate in ESL instruction outside of the scheduled class: Direct supervisors were asked to tutor participants on their job breaks and to practice conversation with the participants by sitting at "English-only" tables during lunch and break time.

As the director of the Anchorage program stresses, when educators worked only with the human resource department of the companies, the workers identified for instruction tended to be new hires. However, when educators worked with the frontline managers, those targeted for instruction were veteran workers with long held literacy or language difficulties. This helped Anchorage fulfill its mission, since the volunteer-based program's mission is to serve those with low literacy skills.

PCAE's Workplace Education Project worked mostly with the human resources and training departments of companies in which they set up workplace programs. CEOs were rather minimally involved in that they generally gave the initial permission for classes to be held. Direct managers of the participants had varying degrees of involvement. Some wished to be quite involved in classroom instruction and would participate in role plays in classes. Each site where there were classes had an advisory committee with at least two participant representatives, the project manager, a representative from the human resources or training department, a few direct managers of participants, and the instructors. The advisory committee was always quite active in all aspects of the program. If workers needed to speak Spanish on the committee in order to be understood, that was acceptable. As the project manager says, "it is necessary to walk a fine line to meet the needs of all the stakeholders."

Further, as was mentioned earlier, the Pima County project keeps managers well informed. After the program is completed, PCAEWEP sends the managers letters that outline the successes of the program and list scores on tests and other assessment results anonymously. This ensures the involvement of this vital stakeholder without violating the privacy of individual participants.

In New York, the Consortium for Worker Education has found tha naging a workplace education program is complicated process. All the stakeholders' needs and goals must be taken into account—the company's need for higher production; the union's need to be part of the job reorganization and to achieve the best conditions for workers; and the workers' need for good, secure jobs. As the coordinator said, it falls on the educational partner to be sensitive to all these varying needs and goals.

At StorageTek, where the instructional program took full advantage of the fact that classes were held on site and were part of the company itself, the CEO was a major supporter and had general oversight. The first and second level managers, those who were directly supervising employee participants, were kept informed on the project and provided input on class content. Every week, they were given reports on what the class was doing and how individual learners were faring. They arranged schedules

so that employees could take the classes. The StorageTek instructors taught the classes, wrote the curriculum, assessed the learners, and solicited input from and gave input to the first level managers on learner needs and progress.

LinguaTec has found that, although there are variations among companies and programs, all the stakeholders—the workers, frontline managers and middle managers, the vice presidents of management, and the educators—tend to be very involved in the programs. To encourage managerial involvement, participants are given so-called "coaching tips" to share with managers or colleagues who want to help them improve their skills.

At Anchorage, the involvement of frontline managers has varied according to company. When the general manager was very involved in the program, encouraging and making it possible for workers to attend classes, it actually seemed to keep the worker turnover down; workers would stay and learn new jobs at the worksite. When the Anchorage program was still funded by the NWLP, the workers, human resource departments, general managers, and frontline managers had an official part to play in the program as members of the advisory team at each worksite. The team participated in the planning and implementing of the workplace program.

Focusing on Education or Training?

Although businesses seemed relatively willing to fund the TQM courses and discrete, short-term courses which have easily observable outcomes, such as accent reduction, it was especially difficult to find funding for classes for workers with the lowest level of literacy and language proficiency in English. This is not surprising, given the distinctions that exist between the concepts of training and education.

Grognet (1994; 1995) describes the distinction as follows: businesses are attuned to training, educators to education. Education is long term, sequential, knowledge oriented, de-contextualized and connected to other education and advancement opportunities within a company or across companies. Training is short term, not sequential, and separate. It can "stand alone" (1995, p. 12). Companies are familiar and comfortable with the concept of training.

In workplace ESL instructional programs with low-level learners, this distinction can be problematic. Many programs, among them the REEP workplace program and the Pima County workplace program, have grappled with the length of time needed for a learner to become proficient in a second language and the number of instructional hours an employer is willing to fund. Employers often have unrealistic expectations of the time needed to learn a language and are unwilling to fund long-term programs. Yet, the language progress the employer is seeking is difficult to achieve in a few short weeks. In response to this, as was described above, the two programs have found that packaging education as training to make it more palatable to businesses, offering short discrete classes with very specific, attainable goals is a way to market their programs to employers not wanting to offer and pay for long courses. When these goals are attained, as

REEP found, it is often easier to offer the employer additional, follow-up courses.

Increasingly, workplace ESL instructional programs, including the one at StorageTek in Colorado, and those in Pima County, Arizona, and El Paso, Texas, have developed courses for the high performance workplace (e.g., courses or lessons on teamwork, and problem solving). However, these programs found that before such courses could be taught, learner preparation courses that would include cultural information on the American workplace were needed. Language learners needed first to be able to indicate lack of comprehension, need for clarification, and desire to express themselves on the job. In addition, in workplaces where writing was expected as part of the team-based work, instruction in basic writing skills was needed before genre writing, such as memos or action plans, could be taught. Once again, all stakeholders need to understand the length of time needed to become proficient in a new language prior to start of a workplace ESL instructional program. Often, before the company can provide *training* for its workers, it must first provide *education* to enable learners to benefit from that training.

The project director of the Anchorage program says she would also like to offer both short-term and long-term classes for the participants. Short-term classes are important because businesses want quick results, and participants need to feel completion. Short-term classes can give a high profile to an instructional program because they often lend themselves to awarding of certificates at ceremonies held to mark the completion of these classes. Of course, long-term classes are necessary to improve substantially the language and literacy skills of the workers. The coordinator however, recognizing that one cannot be all things to all people, said that it is also necessary for a workplace educational provider to know about company training and other training in the community to fill in the gaps for the learners.

Closely tied to the issues of training and education are the issues of "worker needs" and "workplace needs." Some educators distinguish between *work*-centered instruction and *worker*-centered instruction. For them, in work-centered instruction, the goals for the educational program are based on the employers' perception of participants' language needs for their work. Conversely, worker-centered instruction concentrates on what the workers want to learn for their job and also for their daily lives (Gillespie, 1996; Grognet, 1994; McGroarty and Scott 1993). The more participatory, learner-centered approach mirrors a common approach to adult basic and adult ESL instruction that builds the curriculum around discussion of issues drawn from the learners' own lives (See Auerbach, 1992; and Nash, Cason, Rhum, McGrail, & Gomez-Sanford, 1992.)

Workplace programs that are operated through unions or that have labor organizations as partners often focus on discovering and offering instruction on what participants need to know for their own life as well as for the tasks they perform at work (Rosenblum, 1996). Company-sponsored programs will often be concerned that what is learned in class improve worker behavior and (ultimately) workplace productivity. However, it is simplistic to assert that it is always the labor partner who wants a worker-centered approach while the business partner always looks for instruction to help the participants improve only those language skills needed within the confines of the job. One project director reported that in one of the companies she worked with (where there was no labor partner), the business was very clear that it wanted the education staff to provide instruction that participants would need for all their language needs in all facets of their lives, (e.g., when speaking with children's teachers, at the bank,

when shopping, when using public transportation, etc.). And curricula developed by projects with labor partners may show little attention to vocabulary and contexts beyond the workplace, and little attention to worker rights.

Due in part to some of these rather blurry distinctions, some educators see the issue of work-centered versus worker-centered education as overblown. Grognet (1995) points out that "effective education for the workplace both empowers workers as individuals and makes them more efficient in their jobs" (p. 12). Information gathered from discussions with the project directors interviewed for this paper supports Grognet's point. They felt that workplace ESL instruction, whether work-centered or worker-centered, empowered participants in that it gave them much needed practice with language.

Volunteer-based programs saw it as their mission to provide instruction to the lowest level workers. Because these classes were virtually free to the companies (instructors were not paid and little, if any, release time was provided) the programs were often allowed to hold long-term classes at the worksite.

Nussbaum (1992) tells how she, as the first ESL coordinator and a paid StorageTek employee, recruited volunteer instructors from the Storage Tek workforce to provide ESL instruction to their language minority coworkers. Nussbaum trained the volunteers, wrote the curricula and individual lesson plans for the six volunteer instructors, and supervised the instruction. She cited some benefits to using coworkers as instructors in this team-based workplace: The knowledge the instructors had of workplace language, tasks, and issues gave them the ability to "weave all of the classroom activities" so that nonnative English-speaking employees were "empowered in the company" (pp. 23, 24). There were drawbacks, though, to using volunteer instructors, Nussbaum asserted; the major one being that the volunteers were not trained in second language development and second language teaching and there was no time to train them.

The subject of using volunteer-based instruction at the workplace is probably one that will receive more attention in the upcoming months. There is a national focus on using volunteers to fill gaps that the downsizing of government programs will bring, and a literacy initiative is included. However, as Diane Kangisser pointed out in 1985 in her analysis of volunteers and literacy, volunteerism is no panacea for the problem of illiteracy. There are not enough volunteers to reach those in need. Volunteers now have less time to give than in the past because of changing employment patterns, and full- and part-time paid staff are now needed to fill the roles once held by volunteers. And finally—and this is especially true in workplace-specific instruction—whereas volunteers may be cost-effective, time and money must be spent to recruit, train, supervise, supply with teaching materials, and provide whatever other support is needed to the volunteers.

The program in Anchorage clearly showed the pluses and minuses of volunteer-based instruction. Instruction was being provided to those most in need of it, including those not yet employed. And companies, although unwilling to provide minimum funding for books and release time for tutors, would make substantial donations to the literacy council itself. Yet instructional staff turnover, traditionally high in all adult ESL programs (Crandall, 1994), was very high in volunteer-based programs, as was absenteeism. To illustrate: whereas paid instructors may leave a program after teaching only one course, unpaid tutors would leave in mid-course or be absent frequently throughout the course. Further, many of the processes that the Anchorage workplace program continues to use and

point to as advantages for the program were processes set up when there was government funding to pay for instructor training, teaching hours, and curriculum development.

It is hoped that educators and policymakers will be able to square the need for a literate workforce with the economic realities of the nineties. However, with priority being placed on balancing the federal budget, this appears unlikely.

Customizing the Curricula or Developing Generic Competencies?

The issue of customizing curricula to the needs of specific worksites is related to the confusion between training and education. As was discussed above, some programs are offering short, discrete courses in such topics as teamwork and accent reduction, and advertise that they will further customize these courses to the specific company that purchases the program.

In California, state funds support a project administered through the California Community Colleges State Chancellor's Office, that funds 10 resource centers serving 100 community colleges throughout the state. These resource centers provide training for community college faculties in workplace education and distance learning technology. The centers also offer specialized courses for practitioners and would-be practitioners of workplace ESL education on such topics as how to do needs assessment and how to market oneself. Further, the resource centers will develop customized courses for companies upon request, as well. (Mission College, 1995).

Customizing courses is extremely costly, however, as it requires the work and time of a trained educator. The NWLP required its grantees to customize courses and provided funds for doing so. However, programs operating without this funding reported difficulty in getting companies to agree to pay for customizing time. Some of the service providers interviewed from projects not funded under NWLP, especially private consultants, spoke of having been "burned," that is, having spent unreimbursed hours of work on site observing workers, interviewing supervisors, and collecting printed matter, followed by many more hours of developing a curriculum from this. Some service providers, such as LinguaTec, say they will no longer customize a curriculum for a project unless the business will pay. Others, such as Fairfax County, are still willing to "invest" some of these hours, hoping to get a foot in the door, and perhaps get enough repeat business from a certain company or companies to cover this extra expense. The Pima County Adult Education project's stance on charging for customization falls somewhere in the middle: PCAE tries to load the cost of customization in the charge per instructional hour rather than charge directly for all customization time.

Although the NWLP required that all curricula developed for projects it funded be worksite and job specific, education providers, at final meetings held for all grantees, stressed the need for curricula to be replicable and transferable to other programs and settings (United States Department of Education, 1992). And now, as companies cover larger portions of the costs for instruction, this transferability of curricula may be a necessity. Companies may be reluctant to fund course customization because they often do not know what outcome they want from the ESL instruction. Some programs (REEP's, Pima County's) report that companies often do not really know how they would like the courses to be customized, and when asked, either say they would rather leave it up to the educational provider or say they just want the participants "to be able to speak English."

How can curricula be both generic and specific? Programs can develop curricula with competencies or instructional objectives that are described in task-based terms such as "students will be able to *read a chart*" (Peyton & Crandall, 1995). These terms are applicable to work in general, but use language and examples from the specific workplace. For example, instruction on the generic competency "reading charts and schedules" could utilize specific charts, such as work schedules from the individual workplace, to provide the practice (U.S. Department of Education, 1992). Of course, it is the responsibility of the program to make the connection overtly from the lifeskills being learned to their application to the specific workplace and to other aspects of life (e.g., to reading charts in a doctor's office, or reading a bus schedule).

Pima County Adult Education Workplace Education Project has found its generic competencies useful in that they minimize the work needed to customize the curriculum. With written materials such as signs and policy manuals from the individual sites, and with stakeholder interviews and the observations at the worksite, the Workplace Education Project is able to tailor the program to each site. Having offered workplace ESL classes since 1988, the Workplace Education Project has been able to establish a list of generic competencies for the language and literacy needs of the language minority worker. The topics for the competencies were personal information; socializing at work; tools, supplies, equipment, and materials; learning, doing, and teaching the job; working in teams; health and safety on the job; company policy; and performance evaluations. At the Center for Applied Linguistics, Grognet (1996) has also developed a list of generic competencies that include such topics as workplace communications and expectations, company organization and culture, and skills upgrading.

Related to this issue is the current national focus on tying adult education funding to instruction that will prepare learners for the workplace (although not through direct grants to workplace projects). In 1992, the Secretary (of Labor)'s Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) published a list of foundation skills and workplace competencies that all adults need to be successful at the workplace (See Whetzel, 1992, for a discussion of the SCANS skills). Now, with the current welfare reform limiting the participation of public aid recipients in adult basic education and ESL classes, some educators feel that adult ESL programs should address workplace competencies. At the TESOL conference in Orlando in April 1997, at least four presentations dealt specifically with teaching the SCANS skills in adult ESL programs. One of these was given by Fairfax County Adult Education. With a small grant they won from the Center for Applied Linguistics, they are creating lessons for the general ESL curriculum that incorporate the SCANS competencies. Preliminary results show that feedback they are getting from instructors and from learners is valuable from the standpoints of both curriculum development and teacher training.

Demonstrating Results

Workplace programs are intended to have practical outcomes; that is, improvement in language proficiency and literacy needs to show a corresponding improvement in worker behavior and in workplace productivity. Problems arise here, however. The first is that of assigning responsibility for improvement in worker behavior and workplace productivity to instruction in language and basic skills. As Sarmiento points out (1993), the overall workplace structure needs to be considered when evaluating the effectiveness of workplace programs. Indeed, reports such as *America's Choice: High Skills or Low Wages* (Commission on Skills in the American Workforce, 1990) argue that

education will have little impact on the workplace if workplaces are not restructured so that the skills of all workers are appreciated and used, worker input in decision making is valued, and opportunities exist for advancement.

For adults learning English as a second language in the workplace, the issue of offering the worker opportunities to succeed is more complex. Many language minority workers come from cultures where values such as assertiveness, speaking up on the job, and ambition are not greatly valued. For Southeast Asian workers, for example, quietly following directions (even if the directions are not understood!) and not doing anything to draw attention to themselves may be behaviors valued by their cultures. Just as workers may hesitate to indicate lack of comprehension of what has been said, they may also hesitate to be assertive, to speak up, to offer suggestions, and to seek promotion. For these workers, advancing oneself in the U.S. workplace is a skill that needs to be taught, just as English language proficiency and literacy skills are taught (Burt & Saccomano, 1995).

Another problem inherent in this issue is the measurement of worker and workplace improvement. In the service industries (hospitals, residential centers, restaurants) where there are no products being manufactured, what measures of workplace productivity can be used? A decreased accident rate at the workplace is often cited as leading to higher productivity and financial savings for a company. Some workplace programs use such measures as increased number of oral and written suggestions made in team meetings by the workers whose native language is not English (Mrowicki & Conrath, 1994). Other measures include promotion, improved workplace attendance, and expressions of willingness to be "cross-trained" or to learn other, comparable jobs at the worksite (Alamprese & Kay, 1993).

Some workplace education service providers reported that they are meeting with company managers at the outset of the program to discuss the employer's expectations of the program. Faith Hayflich of LinguaTec emphasizes that whereas consultants need to be flexible and open to requests from businesses to provide a variety of instructional programs and services, they also need to set limits. They are not doing themselves or anyone else a favor if they agree to do programs they are not comfortable doing just to get the job. For example, LinguaTec will not offer English classes in a monolingual environment where English is not spoken. They will no longer do extensive development work including a job task language assessment without being paid for those hours. And they also realize that in some workplaces there are internal political concerns that are beyond the scope of LinguaTec's expertise. Similarly, Deborah Kennedy of Language at Work says that she will not provide classes that stray too far from language and cultural content, because she is not qualified to do so and the return on investment would be minimal for the company.

Debora Buxton, the ESL coordinator of the Consortium for Worker Education, reported that she has found that the consortium needs to take time initially to educate the unions, companies, and workers about the amount of time needed to effect change in literacy and language proficiency. It needs to work with these partners to set realistic, attainable goals that meet the learners' needs as well as those of the union and the company. The consortium also needs to take the time to point out where and how progress is being made through the classes at the workplace. Finally, the curriculum writer, teachers, and coordinators have to go out on the shop floor to see what really happens before, during, and after the workplace program is offered, and to see if their program is addressing the needs.

At StorageTek, although many participants had made improvement in English, managers and coworkers still had unrealistic expectations about how much improvement eight weeks of instruction could really effect. These expectations were shared by native speaking coworkers who resented the fact that, even after instruction in English, the nonnative workers persisted in speaking their native language among themselves. There was also some resentment of all the attention nonnative workers were receiving through special classes and ceremonies upon completion of specific levels.

In an effort to adjust these expectations and to maximize "buy-in" from the managers, the ESL coordinator set up management meetings before each class with first and second level management. At this time, she let them know how much progress they could anticipate with the eight-week program. To minimize resentment from coworkers, she set up mentoring programs where native speakers worked with nonnative speakers in the class. She also worked to get the diversity program that was offered to all workers more integrated with the ESL classes.

Westerfield and Burt (1996) offer some suggestions on how to quantify some hitherto unquantifiable outcomes. They recommend that the company and the ESL service provider make a list of all possible performance discrepancies the company wishes to eliminate, and then determine how costly these problems are to the company, whether in time lost, money spent needlessly, or in lowered morale on the job, for example. The service provider can then determine whether ESL instruction can correct the problem and how much time will be needed to do so. Again, there seems to be value in looking at short, highly targeted specialized classes with reachable outcomes, such as those currently being offered by the REEP program and by Pima County Adult Education.

Developing a Professional Workforce for the Delivery of Instruction

Professional development opportunities for adult educators, especially those working with adults learning English as a second language, are inadequate. In-service training opportunities are also very limited. After becoming employed by a program, most adult educators work part-time, perhaps at several different locations, and are offered little ongoing professional development (Chisman, Wrigley, & Ewen, 1993; Crandall, 1993; Crandall, 1994). Even fewer universities and colleges offer instruction geared to prepare teachers for the workplace. However, such courses do seem to be showing up in some university catalogs now, (e.g. American University, the University of Illinois at Carbondale) and this may be an area where growth will occur in the next few years (See Jameson, 1997, for a more complete listing).

NWLP-funded projects required programs to chronicle the staff development that occurred during the course of their projects. However, little money was allocated for this purpose, and some workplace instructional program directors reported that in the face of little time, money, and materials to change their ways, many ESL instructors relied on their old, familiar methods of teaching: using a grammar-based approach at worst, or a notional/functional approach at best with minimal input of workplace language and materials (Burt, 1994).

As discussed above, the Pima County project manager advises hiring an excellent staff, making them full-time, with benefits if possible, and paying them for all staff development, curriculum development and teaching hours. She also recommends that programs have monthly trainings and staff meetings. REEP and Fairfax County

provide periodic training for their teachers. However, as described above in the section on securing funding, the nature of the job mitigates against having frequent organized trainings: Teachers are usually part-time and often work in several different locations at different times of the day or evening. In fact, it would seem that the problems of adult education in general are only exacerbated in the world of workplace instruction.

An issue with volunteer programs is staff turnover. As teachers are not paid, staff turnover can be high, higher probably than in programs where staff is contracted and paid for hours of instruction. The English for Special Purposes (ESP) special interest group of the Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) organization has a task force that is working on developing standards for teacher certification in workplace ESL. Requiring standards for certification will not change the fact that many adult ESL practitioners teach, and will continue to teach, without special training or credentialing in the field of ESL itself, not to mention workplace instruction. Setting up standards is, however, a first step toward demonstrating an awareness of the distinctness and importance of workplace English as a second language.

ESL instructors working with adults need training in adult learning theory, multicultural issues, and techniques and content for English as a second language. Workplace ESL instructors need additional training. Mansoor (1994, pp. 1-4) lists the following examples of knowledge and skills needed for instructors offering instruction at the workplace:

- ability to understand the mission of the business and how workplace instruction fits;
- ability to showcase programs to the business and other interested audiences;
- knowledge of and ability to use creative problem solving techniques;
- ability to identify issues related to cross-cultural or multicultural communication;
- ability to communicate information on learner progress so that it is comprehensible to trainee's supervisors; and
- ability to collect and modify job-related materials.

Recently, professional development is taking place in cyberspace on the various electronic networks, including WEC-L, TESLIT-L, and NIFL-ESL. While these lists provide opportunities for practitioners to share resources and training tips, these forums do not fill the training gap for educators offering ESL instruction at the workplace.

Agenda for Research

The issues, challenges, and trends discussed above show the need for more research in three key areas: documenting the skills and discourse used in the workplace; learning what works best in addressing these skills so that improvement in workplace productivity occurs; and determining how to assess program outcomes, costs, and benefits.

Workplace Skills and Discourse

In the late 1980s, when workplace instructional programs were beginning to receive federal funds and attention, there was a perception that task analyses (that is the observation and recording of discrete steps involved in carrying out workplace tasks) would provide most if not all of the information needed to write curricula and to identify program outcomes (see, for example, Philippi, 1988). Today there is a growing awareness of the need for multiple measures to identify and determine program outcomes adequately (Alamprese, 1994). There is also a sense that because what goes on at the workplace involves more than just workplace tasks (e.g., staff meetings, union functions), there is a need to observe and record the language and literacy skills necessary to be successful in these situations as well (Burt & Saccomano, 1995; Gillespie, 1996). The workplace project at El Paso illustrated the need to look realistically at what workplace discourse actually takes place in English. In some workplaces, especially those in border areas of the United States, the workforce can be bilingual, and much of the commerce is actually done in a second language (Spanish, in this case). With this in mind, some workplaces do not insist on English use only in the classes. Instructors, learners, and supervisors all speak both English and Spanish.

McGroarty (1990) has pointed out, however, that even in workplaces where a second language is not discouraged, English and the second language (again, usually Spanish) are not equal. To advance through the ranks, to be truly successful, workers *must* speak English fluently. And, it is *not* necessary for workers to speak Spanish fluently to be promoted and to rise in the organization.

Although many project directors and curriculum writers have developed lists of competencies for internal use in their programs, there have been few attempts to chronicle generic ESL listening, speaking, reading, and writing competencies needed at the workplace. There has been no concerted federal effort, such as that funded by the Australian government, to research workplace discourse, to develop competencies across occupational fields, and to design courses that prepare teachers for workplace instruction. (See Candlin, 1995).

More research on workplace discourse, including the use of the native language at the workplace, is warranted.

What Works in Workplace Education

There is also a need for identification and dissemination of research on best teaching practices. What works best with entry level workers, with those who are not literate in their native language, and with those at a higher level?

Some research is being funded. In the summer of 1995, the U.S. Department of Education funded a long-term study of what works with low-literate ESL learners. Approaches to instruc-

tion, curricula, and learner assessment will be examined in selected programs with large numbers of low-literate learners. Some of these programs will include workplace ESL instruction.

An ongoing research project in workplace education is the national evaluation of the National Workplace Literacy Program. This evaluation, begun in 1994, was to extend for three years, with the purpose of identifying and reporting the outcomes of the six years of the NWLP. Workplace ESL instructional programs, were, of course, included in the evaluation. Case studies of five of these projects are expected to be published in 1998, four of which include some ESL instruction. It is expected that this report will shed some light on effective practices.

How to Assess Program Outcomes, Costs, and Benefits

Companies need a good reason to sponsor workplace ESL instruction. A number of individuals and educational institutions are succeeding in getting businesses to pay for this instruction. What are they doing? How are they convincing the business sector to pay for this? What are they using to show return on investment to them? Research is needed on this subject, on a broader scale than was done for this paper. A larger-scale national survey similar to the ones done by the U.S. Department of Labor (1994; 1996a, 1996b) and the one done by the Illinois Literacy Resource Development Center (1993) on who provides instruction in ESL and basic skills and why (and why not!) would provide this information.

Surveys conducted by the Department of Labor (1994; 1996a; 1996b) indicate that the number of businesses providing instruction in ESL or basic skills is still very low. The earliest study (1994) revealed that of 12,000 businesses surveyed in 1993, only 3% offered training in basic skills or in ESL. In a later, smaller study, 1000 employers and 1000 employees were asked about training they had received in 1995. Employers reported that only 1% of the formal training they offered was in basic skills (including ESL) training. This averaged out to .1 hour per year per employee. In comparison, nearly 20% of the total training was computer training, nearly 12% was professional and technical training, 11% was occupational safety training, and 13.2% was communications and quality training (1996a). Similarly, the employees surveyed reported receiving little training in basic skills and ESL. Seven percent of the 1000 surveyed said they had received formal training in basic skills or ESL. Once again, however, formal training in computers; occupational safety; and communications, employee development, and quality was much more prevalent, with 38%, 58%, and 48% receiving training in these areas (1996b).

The reasons why companies might or might not offer basic skills instruction have not been well explored. In Illinois, managers, education providers, employees, and supervisors from 21 companies were interviewed to learn why businesses do or do not provide basic skills and ESL instruction (Illinois Resource Development Center, 1993). Fourteen companies indicated that they did provide this instruction, seven did not. The reasons given for providing instruction were the following:

1. Quality improvement

Companies providing quality improvement training find that the training is not successful, due to deficits in language and basic skills.

2. Commitment of top management to training and education

In companies where training and education are part of the management philosophy, there is more of a likelihood that instruction in basic skills and ESL will be offered.

3. Sales effort of an educational provider

Educational providers who are skilled at marketing their services are often successful in winning contracts with companies. If the employer has heard of the service provider, or has a "previously established relationship" with the educator (p. 3) there is a greater chance that the employer will purchase the educator's services.

The reasons given by the Illinois companies for not providing instruction were the following: cost of instruction and reluctance of upper management to initiate instruction, probably due in part to lack of information about the need, costs, and availability of programs. Another reason may be that employers screen applicants through a basic skills test; other employers organize the workplace so that the language and literacy deficits of already hired workers do not hinder productivity. In these cases, workers are given back-of-the-house positions where there is little contact with the public and little need to speak English. In companies where many workers speak a common language, such as Spanish, frontline managers will speak the native language of the worker, and the lack of English can be almost irrelevant to the work flow. (See Burt, 1995, for a more complete discussion of the issue of why employers do and do not provide basic skills and ESL instruction.)

The information from the Illinois study is useful, but it has been done on a very small scale. Replication of this study nationally could add much to the knowledge base. Also needed is research on what companies use as barometers of success. What makes them return to the service provider to ask for more classes? To date, what little is known about this comes from anecdotal reports during interviews such as the ones conducted for this study.

Some companies may be realizing that it may be costing them more in the long run not to offer basic skills instruction: A recent issue of *Business Week* (Yang, Palmer, Browder, & Cuneo, 1996, November 11) tells the story of one such company:

The Marriott Corporation will be adding 1,000 more franchised hotels by the year 2000, and will nearly double the number of its so-called "hourly associates." Hourly associates are paid by the hour and work in entry-level positions. Many have very limited English literacy and proficiency. In 1993, Marriott began studying its hourly employees and discovered that nearly 25% had some literacy difficulties, most of which had to do with speaking English. Further, the company knows that the old way of making up for workers' deficits in language and skills by relying on the manager to fill the gaps will no longer be effective: The corporation is cutting back on management staff and has reduced the number of their supervisors by 5% in the last few years. Marriott is offering ESL and basic skills instruction at the workplace both as a way to upgrade skills and as a benefit for entry-level workers. The company hopes to keep staff turnover rates down and thus save on recruiting and retraining costs for new hires.

Presumably, other companies will begin to do the math themselves and discover that there is a return on their investment when they offer classes to improve the language and literacy skills of the hourly workforce. It is hoped that their experiences will be documented so that others may benefit from them.

Conclusion

Workplace ESL instruction is perhaps distinct from other kinds of adult ESL instruction in that everyone connected to the project pays in some way for the instruction. Grognet (1994, p. 9) described it this way:

"The federal, state, and local governments fund programs through grants; employers pay through release time and stipends for their employees, and through paying for teachers' salaries and for books and other instructional materials; employees pay with their time; unions pay with outlays for staff and with an infrastructure for education (e.g., promotion of contract negotiations for, and recruiting for workplace programs); and education providers pay through their infrastructures, which allow them to provide personnel, training, curricula, 'upon demand.'"

With the loss of public funding, the workplace partner is being called upon to pick up more of the cost of running these programs. Interviews with project directors revealed that, as this has happened, many of the ESL educational providers have begun to develop *shorter* courses, with narrowly defined outcomes. These courses are offered to employers that have indicated receptivity to training and education. And, when providing these courses, the educators are feeling the need to do what had been promised, and not to promise what can not be done.

Yet, also with the loss of public funding comes a lifting of certain restrictions. Programs are no longer limited in their course offerings by the arbitrary distinction between job skills and basic skills. New courses in cross-cultural issues, courses to prepare workers for the high performance workplace including team-based management and TQM, for example, and courses where both native and nonnative workers learn together are being developed.

Just as the workplace itself is changing, ESL educators need to change in order to be successful in workplace ESL instruction. They need to learn new skills. They need to learn about specific jobs and how work is done in the private sector. They need to learn about creative problem solving and team-based management. They need to do research in their communities to learn who needs workplace ESL instruction and who is willing to fund it. They need to find creative ways of fostering collaboration among businesses for workplace ESL program support. And they need to learn to sell themselves and their product.

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Appendix A: List of Programs

Featured Programs:

- Pima County Adult Education Workplace Education Project PCAEWEP (Tucson)
- Worker Education Consortium (New York)
- StorageTek (Denver)
- LinguaTec, Inc. (Sunnyvale, California)
- Anchorage Literacy Project (Alaska)

Other Programs Discussed:

- Arlington Education and Employment Program (REEP) (Virginia)
- Fairfax County Public Schools Adult English As A Second Language Program (Virginia)
- El Paso Community College (EPCC)
- Worker Education Program (Chicago)
- Language at Work (LAW) (Washington, D.C.)
- Language Training Designs (Rockville, Maryland)
- San Fernando Valley Literacy Council Project (California)
- Spanish Education and Development (SED) Center English as a Second Language Program (Washington, D.C.)

Appendix B: Interview Summaries

Arlington Education and Employment Program (REEP): Interview with Inaam Mansoor, December 4, 1995

1. What are the goals of your program?

- to make ESL programming available to limited English speakers who work in Arlington, Virginia, and who, because of family and work schedules, cannot access the regular ESL programs
- to provide access to instruction in a variety of ways

2. Who were and are the stakeholders in your workplace program? Who had the least involvement? Who had the most? How were the others involved?

As far as stakeholders are concerned, REEP has found that it is necessary either for the top level management to be very committed to the program or for the bottom level, the workers or their direct managers. If the education department does not have the support of either (if not both) of these entities, the program will run into obstacles, as human resource directors and personnel have little authority over managers to compel them to release workers from their daily schedules to attend classes. Unions are not a factor in Virginia, as it is a right-to-work state.

When there is active support from all the major stakeholders at all stages of the program from the planning to the implementation to the evaluation, REEP has found that the time and expense needed to market the program both internally (within the company) and externally (to other companies) is dramatically reduced.

3. What in the needs analysis did you establish as critical points of instruction?

- Communicating with guests and clients: using pleasantries, answering questions, fulfilling requests, reading messages/notes, giving directions, giving information requested, referring clients elsewhere on site for help, providing positive atmosphere
- Communicating with supervisors: following instructions, understanding job tasks, talking on phone or pager, knowing how to handle criticism or praise, confirming understanding, asking questions
- Communicating with coworkers: finding out what needs to be done, being friendly, getting supplies, must be able to follow fast speech and various accents, (working part of a team)
- Major functions: clarifying and verifying, making suggestions, seeing need and responding without being asked, confirming understanding, asking questions when they do not understand
- Forms: understanding paychecks and work schedules
- Health, safety, and illness: understanding, explaining, and responding to information

4. How many classes did you offer? What were they? What was in the general curriculum?

Forty-nine classes were offered at 26 sites. Curricula were developed for workers in custodial service, housekeeping, food and beverage for hotels, landscaping, banqueting, health care, environmental services, dietary, and retail for 7-Eleven stores. In addition, there was access to computer-assisted instruction for participants at two learning centers.

The curricula stressed listening and speaking first, then the writing needed in the critical areas listed above.

5a. What do you consider the accomplishments of REEP's Workplace Program?

Under the federal grants it received from 1988-1994, REEP developed an infrastructure that has allowed it to continue to offer workplace services at a negligible cost. The program has learned to understand the workplace ESL instructional needs of businesses, and has learned how to engage businesses in planning, implementing, and evaluating these programs. It can now provide a wide range of options to meet workplace ESL instructional needs. Finally, the program has developed a workplace video series, *English Works*, that is being distributed by Addison Wesley/Longman's. The packet consists of video taped role plays on workplace situations (e.g., applying for a promotion, learning safety on the job) and a student workbook.

5b. What has not worked so well for the REEP?

Getting adequate intensive time to effect change in learners' English ability remains a challenge. The norm for the classes is 60 hours of instruction spread out over 15 weeks of classes. However, this means only 4 hours of instruction per week. The time is too long, and the hours are too short to effect change. What the program has moved to is getting the employers to set goals, to know what can realistically be done in 60 hours, or even less. For example, now that the classes are all on contract, and there are no federal monies supporting them, cost is even more a factor. The current workplace coordinator has had some success in offering 30-hour, highly targeted classes with a few short, attainable objectives. In at least one case, the employer has signed on for an additional 30 hours to continue the instruction for the group.

6. What did you find to be replicable?

Both for itself and for other programs and practitioners in the field, REEP has developed generic curricula that can be used with minimal customization. Commercially developed software has also been successfully customized to meet participants' needs in various classes.

7. What would you do differently if you had it to do again? How has the program evolved over time?

Over time, REEP has learned the necessity of being flexible, of not insisting on any one way of doing anything. For example, the program does not insist on 100% release time for the participants. As the director of the programs

says: "[when we meet with the companies to plan the courses] we're there to hear what they need. There is no must about what we suggest to them." In order to respond to both the employers' and participants' need for results, REEP has started to "package" their program in small chunks of 30 hours (half the earlier 60) with discrete attainable objectives.

8. Anything else?

Having gone from a high of $200,000 funding to the current $15,000, REEP/Arlington finds that now it is a very reactive, rather than proactive, workplace program. As a result, it is very important that all the replicable products and processes defined above were developed while funding was still available.

Pima County Adult Education's Workplace Education Project (PCAEWEP): Interview with Linda Hellman, November 26, 1995

1. What are the goals of your program?

To improve workers' basic skills, including English, so that the results are easily shown at the workplace, and so that the needs of both the worker and the workplace are met. A further goal of the program is that it be of high quality and be recognized and respected in the community.

2. Who were and are the stakeholders in your workplace program? Who had the least involvement? Who had the most? How were the others involved?

The Workplace Education Project worked mostly with the human resources and training departments of companies to set up workplace programs. CEOs were generally rather minimally involved in that they gave the initial permission for classes to be held. As Arizona is a right-to-work state, there were no union partners in the projects. The direct managers of the participants had varying degrees of involvement. Some wished to be quite involved and participate in role plays in classes; others preferred to limit their participation to facilitative support.

Each class site had an advisory committee with two participant representatives, a project manager, a representative from the human resources or training department, a few direct managers of participants, and the instructors. The advisory committee was quite active in all aspects of the program, at all times. If workers needed to speak Spanish on the committee in order to be understood, that was acceptable. As the project managers said: "It is necessary to walk a fine line to meet the needs of all the stakeholders."

3. What in the needs analysis did you establish as critical points of instruction?

Having offered workplace ESL classes since 1988, the Workplace Education Project was able to establish, over time, a list of generic competencies for the language and literacy

needs of the language minority worker. The topics for the competencies were: personal information; socializing at work; tools, supplies, equipment, and materials; learning, doing, and teaching the job; working in teams; health and safety on the job; company policy; and performance evaluations.

The Workplace Education Project has found the competencies useful in that they minimize the work needed to customize the curriculum. With written materials such as signs and policy manuals from the individual sites and with stakeholder interviews and observations at the worksite, the Workplace Education Project is able to tailor programs more easily to each site.

4. How many classes do you offer? What are they? What is in the general curriculum?

1. Basic ESL (listening, speaking, filling out forms) that is usually multilevel, unless the workplace is large enough to support two or more ESL classes

2. Accent reduction

3. Specialty courses: Reading, Writing (often resulting from worker requests)

4. Math classes (second language learners are mixed with native speakers)

5. High level writing classes (mixed with native speakers)

5a. What do you consider the accomplishments of the Workplace Education Project?

Many of the companies have contracted with the Workplace Education Project multiple times. In other words, PCAEWEP does "repeat business" with them. These companies also recommend the program to other companies. Many of the workers have taken multiple classes and/or asked for additional classes. Some of the workers have been promoted. The advisory council is also very successful in getting buy-in and good timely input from all stakeholders throughout the program.

5b. What has not worked so well for the Workplace Education Project?

Earlier on the program sought to link workplace instruction, including the ESL classes, to improved productivity at the workplace. Due to the myriad other factors that play a role in this issue, it is nearly impossible to prove that the educational program is directly responsible for this improvement. Therefore, the Workplace Education Project no longer advertises that it will improve workplace productivity. The fact that companies are seeing the need for instruction and calling the Workplace Education Project to ask them to set up classes is proof that they believe that improved worker performance is one result of the instruction.

Attaching the word "literacy" to educational programs for adults is not advisable. The Workplace Education Project no longer uses that word in connection with the workplace classes.

6. What did you find to be replicable?

Certainly the generic competencies discussed earlier, which were developed through NWLP funding, have proven to be replicable throughout the workplace ESL program. The advisory council is also replicable. Another practice that has evolved over time, and now is a regular feature of the program, is the letter report the project manager sends the company at the conclusion of each class. This report discusses the highlights of the program and anonymously lists the results of learner assessment measures.

Other replicable practices the program has acquired include the need to invest in a program. The program needs to "look good" to potential business clients. The project manager needs to spend time with the company initially to explain the program, and to hand out fact sheets about the project covering courses offered, participating companies, and contact information. As many educational entities have little hard money, it is good to be part of a larger entity, as the Workplace Education Project is part of Pima County Adult Education.

7. What would you do differently if you had it to do again? And how has your program evolved over time?

Over time the Workplace Education Project has learned not to promise what it cannot deliver. It has learned to listen carefully to what the companies are saying in the initial meetings to see exactly what a job entails before agreeing to do it. It has learned to maintain its quality as much as possible, because, as the project manager says, "it's all you have in the end." Because of this quality issue, the Workplace Education Project prefers not to offer multilevel ESL classes, but rather smaller, more homogeneous classes if possible. It has learned the value of a good solid, generic curriculum that can be readily customized to the individual work site or the individual job, if need be.

8. Anything else?

The project manager works hard to keep the program in the public eye. She is actively involved in marketing the program and goes to local and regional business association and training consortia meetings. She also makes "cold calls," if necessary, to promote the program. The system is working, the Workplace Education Project is surviving without federal, state, or local grant monies.

The project manager advises hiring an excellent staff, making them full-time, with benefits, if possible, and paying them for all staff development, curriculum development, and teaching hours. She also recommends that programs have monthly training sessions and staff meetings.

The project manager also recommends that educational providers do market analysis and then go where the need is. She advises providers to be flexible and willing to diversify.

Worker Education Consortium: Interview with Silvana Vasconcelos and Debora Buxton, November 26, 1995

1. What are the goals of your program?

- to improve the quality of the workers' lives
- to help them both to do better at their current jobs and to be more marketable if layoffs occur.

union goals:

- to understand changes in the workplace so that the union and its workers can be part of the decision making process
- language and literacy skills that will enable workers to become more proactive union members

2. Who are the stakeholders in your workplace program? Who has the least involvement? Who has the most? How are the others involved?

- The plant managers (also called general managers) set goals for the program and are often the driving force behind the program, the party that has contacted the consortium for the classes.
- The consortium is the educational partner, the linchpin, the stakeholder that ties it all together, that speaks with the companies, the union, and the workers to plan, deliver, and evaluate the program.
- Workers interview with the consortium before classes; they express their goals and needs to the consortium, and they attend the classes.
- The frontline managers are not always as involved as the consortium would like them to be. Their involvement is key to getting the workers to attend. If they are more concerned about production, they can ask workers to work overtime rather than go to the classes.
- The human resources department is sometimes involved in the workplace program, for example, in training needed for the reorganization of the company to be more total quality management.
- Industrial Technology Assistance Corporation (ITAC). This is a consulting company that the factories have employed to help them change the workplace to high technology, high performance. For one program in particular, where the workplace is going high tech/high performance, ITAC has been a stakeholder in the workplace ESL class to prepare workers for the training that will be offered on the high performance workplace.

3. What in the needs analysis did you establish as critical points of instruction?

- communicating with supervisors: understanding directions, indicating lack of understanding, informing when going to be absent, etc.
- communicating with coworkers: respecting other cultures, understanding diversity, how to speak with those from other cultures, respecting gender differences

- reading and filling out forms: reading signs, work schedules, information about health and safety at the workplace, fill out forms to report what their production has been for the day

- communication skills: participating in union and company meetings

4. How many classes did you offer? What were they? What was in the general curriculum?

- In the five years the program has been running, there have been an average of 10 ESL classes per year. Classes are one and one-half or two hours, twice a week, for a total of 12 weeks.

- Many of the classes have been almost standard adult education ESL classes focusing on all life skills and grammar, with worker rights added.

- More recently classes have been more related to needs analysis of the workplace, have focused on skills needed and written materials used in the workplace. They have also included instruction to prepare workers for possible layoffs, such as interviewing skills and skills for looking and applying for new jobs.

- With the companies that are moving to high performance, total quality workplaces, the consortium has developed a pre-TQM curriculum that includes videotapes and lesson plans to prepare workers with the vocabulary, concepts, and communication skills needed to function in the new-style workplace.

5a. What do you consider the accomplishments of your Workplace Program?

- Self esteem has risen in the worker, especially in the programs where workers create and use videotapes and photos of the workplace as part of the curriculum.

- Worker has seen the whole picture: he sees where he fits into the whole process at work, in some cases the "wall goes down between the worker and the rest of the workforce."

5b. What did not work so well for the program?

- Sometimes the union has not been very involved, and has relied on the consortium to represent their interests. This has been very difficult. It works better when both the company and the union are active, involved partners. The interests of the workers are best realized when this is the case.

- The old model of standard ESL classes with little relation to the workplace was not very successful. Attendance was not good at these classes, and results were not readily seen at the workplace.

- Classes that were 100% on the workers' own time were much less successful, morale was lower, and attendance was poorer than at the classes where there was at least 50% paid release time.

6. What have you found to be replicable?

- the current needs assessment system where all stakeholders are interviewed and extensive observations of the workplace are made
- bringing all the stakeholders together (a recent process) initially at the start of each program to get everyone involved and everyone's input
- having all the participants join in videotaping and photographing the workplace. This has gotten all the workers involved and feeling that they are part of the process.

7. What would you do differently if you had it to do again?

- No standard ESL class; all workplace ESL classes should focus on the workplace.
- No more taking the company's or the union's word for the language and literacy needs of the workers. The workers must be consulted, and the curriculum writer, teachers, and coordinators have to go out on the shop floor to see what really happens.

8. Anything else?

- As the coordinator of the program notes, it is necessary to be very diplomatic in this company and union program. All the players must be handled with great delicacy.

StorageTek: Interview with Audrey Epstein, November 3, 1995

1. What are the goals of your program?

Because technology and job responsibilities were changing at StorageTek as the company moved toward a team environment and a quality management approach, all employees needed to use communication and computers rather than just their hands! All employees needed to be able to use the computer, communicate in teams, solve problems and make decisions. The ESL employees also needed the language and cross-cultural skills to be able to be successful in this work environment.

So, the goals of the Workplace ESL program were:

to prepare workers who were not native speakers of English to function in a Total Quality Management environment, specifically to be able to function in a team-based work environment.

2. Who were and are the stakeholders in your workplace program? Who had the least involvement? Who had the most? How were the others involved?

Several years ago corporate trainers pointed out the language and literacy needs of the non native employees. Tutoring by company volunteers was offered. Then the corporate vice president for manufacturing moved to get paid

instructors and to make the instructors part of the company. Although he was certainly not involved on a day-to-day basis, he was a major supporter and had general oversight. Involved on a regular basis were the first and second level managers, that is, those who were directly supervising (or one step up from) the employees who were participants. They provided the input on what was needed in the classes. They were given reports on what the class was doing and how the individual learners were faring every week. They arranged the schedules so that the employees could take the classes. Of course the two full-time ESL instructors (also employees of StorageTek) were also vital stakeholders. They taught the classes, wrote the curriculum, assessed the learners, and solicited and gave input on learner needs and progress to the first level managers.

3. What in the needs analysis did you establish as critical points of instruction?

Critical points of instruction included the language and literacy necessary for nonnative workers to participate on a team, to use computers, to solve problems, and to make decisions. Employees wishing to be promoted also needed the reading and math literacy to pass the TALS exam. Depending on the level of the learners, often "basic ESL" was needed to prepare the workers to take the higher level classes.

4. How many classes did you offer? What were they? What was in the general curriculum.

Courses were eight weeks in length. They included:

1. Basic ESL

2. Reading for the workplace

3. Writing for the workplace

4. Problem solving for the workplace

5. Classes team-taught with workplace trainers/ specialists on specific customized topics (e.g., TQM, Computers)

6. TALS classes: math and reading (to read charts and graphs)

7. Presentation skills

8. Pronunciation

9. Communication in the workplace

5a. What do you consider the accomplishments of your program?

Vast improvement in English has been made for many of the participants. The company changed its hiring policy to require that all new staff have a certain level on the TALS, so in order to bring the already employed staff "up to scratch" the program taught a course to enable employees to take and pass the TALS. Ninety-five percent of the participants were able to achieve the desired level on the TALS, whereas previously only 5% had passed. Over time the attitude of managers changed, and they began to see ESL as a resource for them and not an extra task.

5b. What has not worked so well for your program?

The expectations of the managers and coworkers remained unrealistic as to how much improvement eight weeks of instruction could effect in the proficiency levels of nonnative workers. Both managers and coworkers still resented the nonnative workers speaking their native language

among themselves. They also harbored some resentment of the attention nonnative workers were receiving, through special classes, ceremonies upon completion of specific level, etc.

6. What did you find to be replicable?

Because the instructors were employees of the company, there was a certain legitimacy to the program, and it was easier for it to be 100% workplace-based. The regular communication between the first level supervisors and the program was also facilitated by this. Team taught classes where the ESL instructor worked with the subject specialist were very successful and replicable, as were the pre-classes taught to prepare the nonnative speakers to take computer or other job-specific classes the company or department was going to offer them.

7. What would you do differently if you had it to do again?

The coordinator would set up management meetings before each class to get more initial buy-in from first and second level management and to inform them of the guidelines and procedures and their part in the process. At this time she would let them know how much progress they could anticipate in the eight-week program. She would set up mentoring programs where native speakers worked with nonnative speakers in the class. She would seek a better integration of the diversity program offered to all workers with the ESL classes. She also would seek to mark each level achieved by the learners in some way, whether it be with a ceremony for the larger milestones, such as passing the TALS, or a certificate when completing one eight-week course. She would try to make the managers and the coworkers part of this marking of progress.

8. Anything else you'd like to add?

"It has been great working inside a company. I hope this situation can last."

LinguaTec: Interview with Faith Hayflich, November 11, 1995

1. What are the goals of your program?

- to improve the access of language minority workers to advancement opportunities at the workplace
- to reduce the barriers to communication between native and nonnative speakers

2. Who are the stakeholders in your workplace program? Who has the least involvement? Who has the most? How are the others involved?

Although it varies by company and program, all the stakeholders—the workers, frontline managers, middle managers, vice presidents of management, and educators—tend to be very involved in the programs.

When worker participation is totally voluntary, direct managers of the participants tend to be less involved. Workers are given so-called "coaching tips" to give managers or colleagues who want to help them improve their skills.

3. What in the needs analysis did you establish as critical points of instruction?

For a very customized course, LinguaTec will conduct an extensive (100-200 hours) needs analysis, plus spend additional time customizing lessons, sometimes an hour or more for each hour of class.

- Engineers: participating in meetings,
  - improving ability to be understood (pronunciation),
  - following typical conversations (idioms and jokes),
  - and creating visibility for themselves to improve upward mobility

- Manufacturing Workers: participating in meetings, when there is a team environment;
  - improving ability to be understood (pronunciation);
  - following instructions (vocabulary development, rapid speech);
  - showing comprehension and asking questions when they're not understood;
  - completing forms; and
  - reading job instructions

4. How many classes did you offer? What were they? What was in the general curriculum?

LinguaTec offers three types of programs:

- Standardized courses developed for technical professionals: These cover such areas as Speaking Under Pressure, Accent Improvement, Idioms and Vocabulary in the Workplace, American Business Culture, etc. (These were initially developed as customized courses but have been standardized based on 15 years' experience working with this group.)

- Customized courses for manufacturing workers, covering the items mentioned in #3

- Customized programs for foreign professionals employed overseas by U.S. companies and sent to the U.S. for technical training. Content includes working with audio tapes of their technical trainers, their technical training videos, and their manuals to improve comprehension.

5a. What do you consider the accomplishments of your program?

- Getting a buy-in from all the stakeholders through the focus group. Focus groups of line supervisors, assemblers (workers), lead assemblers, and human resources staff are held at all sites, permitting LinguaTec to get all players involved, and to solicit input at all stages of the program.

- Balancing corporate and training needs so that LinguaTec can give the client what they want, while maintaining the integrity of the ESL program.

5b. What did not work so well for your program?

For one contract, years ago, LinguaTec agreed to teach English at a worksite where there was no reason for the workers to speak English. All the supervisors and line workers spoke Spanish. Even the president of the company did not speak English. Had LinguTec convened a focus group first at this site, it would have learned that there existed no need for English at the workplace classes.

6. What have you found to be replicable?

- The Job Task Language Assessment process
- A five-minute individual interview to place learners in the proper English level
- Some individual lesson modules, such as the one on "Speaking Up at Meetings," carry through to many workplace settings
- The focus groups

7. What would you do differently if you had it to do again?

LinguaTec will not offer English classes in a monolingual environment where English is not spoken. It will no longer do extensive development work without being paid for those hours. LinguaTec also realizes that in some workplaces there are internal political concerns that are beyond the scope of its expertise.

8. Anything else?

- Private consultants need to be flexible when working with the companies.
- In addition to learning all the functions needed at the workplace, there is a role for grammar and pronunciation in workplace training. There are participants who are very articulate, but can't be understood because of pronunciation issues. Other participants have no "structure" to back them up when they need to, for example, write an email message, so they need grammar training. Of course, both grammar and pronunciation need to be taught in context.

Anchorage Literacy Project: Interview with Roselynn Cacy, November 15, 1995; January 4, 1996

1. What are the goals of your program?

- to teach literacy skills (including ESL) needed in the workplace
- to promote exemplary educational partnerships between the Anchorage Literacy Project and businesses
- to provide a model for replication for other small and intermediate sized businesses

2. Who are the stakeholders in your workplace program? Who has the least involvement? Who has the most? How are the others involved?

The literacy council has offered classes at several sites. The CEOs supported the programs, but delegated responsibilities. The project has not dealt directly with the unions, but rather has always gone through the businesses. The workers have always been the prime stakeholders and have been involved in the program from

the inception through to the end. The involvement of the frontline managers has varied according to the company. When the frontline managers have been strongly involved, more workers, especially those who need to work on language and literacy, have signed up. When the human resources person is the contact person, the participants are more likely to be new workers. When the general manager was greatly involved in the program, encouraging and making it possible for workers to attend the classes, it actually seemed to keep the staff turnover down; workers would stay, and learn new jobs at the worksite. In fact, when the general manager and the frontline manager are both supportive, the program is much more successful and many more workers participate and receive more hours of instruction.

All of these players, the workers, human resources, general managers, and frontline managers, have formally had a part to play in the program as members of the advisory team that is set up at each worksite. They advise the educators.

3. What in the needs analysis did you establish as critical points of instruction?

The needs analysis established that many workers did not have the oral communication skills to prosper on the job. Written work forms were not being done; some avoided even trying to do the forms, some did them incorrectly or incompletely. Finally, there was a problem understanding the pronunciation of many workers, especially by phone. At the same time that these basic skills deficiencies were being discovered, the local companies were facing major changes in work requirements as jobs were requiring more computer and other technical skills. Yet, as the job requirements rose, so did the value placed on those who could speak other languages, as the companies were also expanding to international markets.

4. How many classes did you offer? What were they? What was in the general curriculum?

Twenty-two ESL classes were held, at levels one through four in the Laubach system. The New Readers' Press book, *Lifeprints*, levels 2 and 3 were used. In addition to these commercial textbooks, workplace vocabulary, materials, and conversation formed the basis for the classes. Other classes offered to the ESL learners were pre-algebra and pre-CPR certification (which focused on vocabulary and pronunciation of CPR words).

5a. What do you consider the accomplishments of your program?

- Many (26) participants were promoted, 24 received additional responsibilities.
- Participants started taking advantage of other company-offered classes and benefits as well as the classes.
- One company that was offering classes to employees got computerized during this time; there were no difficulties in making the transition. In fact, it was thought that the ESL classes smoothed the transition for the language minority workers.
- There was increased awareness of the importance of literacy throughout the individual companies and the business community in general.

5b. What did not work so well for your program?

Rapport between the instructor and the learner is very important. Early on in the program, classroom instructors were sometimes changed with little advance warning to the learners. The Alaskan program learned to phase one

instructor in while they were phasing the other out.

The program learned to be careful to meet the needs of the employees as well as the employer. When employee learning needs such as education, advancement on the job, etc., are not met at a particular company, the employee may very well go elsewhere, to another company that does meet these needs.

6. What have you found to be replicable?

When the project was funded under the National Workplace Literacy Program (NWLP), there was money to develop curricula, systems, and teacher training. Although the project is no longer receiving monies from the NWLP, it has the following, specific replicable processes and products from that time that are still successfully in use:

- Having at least one class, two if possible, at two different times right at the worksite during work hours. When these classes are held where they work, whether in the laundry room or the board room, and are visible to workers, interest is stirred in the classes.

- Having an intake procedure that is flexible and comprehensive enough to identify those with other needs (that cannot be met at the workplace) as well as a place to refer these people, for example, to other classes outside the workplace sponsored by the Literacy Council, or to a program at another company where the project is also offering classes.

- Having the actual workplace materials available both to instructors at the worksite and at the Literacy Project Center. Using these with the Laubach materials has been very successful.

- Giving out certificates of completion to put in the workplace folders of those who have taken classes with the council.

- The relationship forged with businesses when program was funded under the NWLP will continue.

- Having an advisory council at each worksite.

7. What would you do differently if you had it to do again?

The coordinator of the program says she would increase the recognition of the businesses throughout the program. She would also push to offer both short-term and long-term classes for the participants. The short-term, because businesses want quick results

and participants need to feel completion. This would also allow for more recognition of the company as the shorter classes would mean frequent awarding of certificates at ceremonies held to mark the completion of the classes. The long-term classes, are, of course, necessary to improve substantively the language and literacy skills of the workers. Recognizing that one cannot be all things to all people, the coordinator said, it is also necessary for a workplace educational provider to know about company training and other training in the community.

8. Anything else?

It is important to respect the confidentiality of the participant and to be accountable to the company that is sponsoring the workplace instruction.

The number one question that is always asked of the volunteer organization offering instruction at the workplace is, can friends and family get involved? Luckily, for a volunteer organization, which is not charging the employers for the classes, the answer is "yes."

PAIE

Project in Adult Immigrant Education

The Project in Adult Immigrant Education (PAIE) focuses on issues in workplace and vocational instruction for adult immigrants and out-of-school youth.

It produces publications and provides technical assistance and training for workplace and vocational ESL educators.

PAIE is funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation through a grant to the Center for Applied Linguistics.

NCLE

National Clearinghouse for ESL Literacy Education

NCLE is an adjunct ERIC clearinghouse established at the Center for Applied Linguistics.

Its mission is to provide practitioners with timely information on adult ESL literacy education.

CAL

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